Four Qualities of Greek Drama:

1. Performed for special occasions (festivals)

   Athens had four festivals worshipping Dionysus -- (Bacchus in Latin, Roman) god of wine, fertility, rebirth

2. Competitive -- prizes awarded

   Actors and playwrights competed -- Oedipus apparently didn't win

3. Choral -- singing seems to have been an important part a chorus of men (varied in size from 3 to 50)
Chorus underscored the ideas of the play, provided point-of-view, and focused on issues of the play and implications of the action, established the play's ethical system, and participated in the action.

4. Closely associated with religion - stories based on myth or history

**Greek Tragedy:**

1. Late point of attack
2. Violence and death, most often, offstage
3. Frequent use of messengers to relate information
4. Usually continuous time of
action
5. Usually single place
6. Stories based on myth or history, but varied interpretations of events
7. Focus is on psychological and ethical attributes of characters, rather than physical and sociological.

Greek Comedy

1. Not admitted to Dionysus festival till 487-486 B.C. - late
2. Unknown origins or influences perhaps from improvisations
3. Comic dramatists besides Aristophanes (more of his plays survived)
4. Commentary on contemporary
society, politics, literature, and Peloponnesian War.
5. Based on a "happy idea" *
6. Exaggerated and farcical